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THE BARONIES OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

By Henry A. M. Smith.

II.

THE FAIRLAWN BARONY.

Next in order of date and importance to the Ashley Barony, or Signiory of St. Giles, was the Signiory of Fairlawn. Generally called Fairlawn Barony, it was properly a Signiory, as it was the grant to one of the Lords Proprietors of an estate, which constituted a Signiory in the hands of a Lord Proprietor.

The Colletons were the only family of the original Lords Proprietors who made their home and actually resided in the Province of South Carolina.

An account of the family was published in this Magazine in October, 1900.[1]

Sir John Colleton, the original Proprietor, died before the grant of the Signiory was issued and was succeeded by his eldest son, Sir Peter Colleton.

On 18th May, 1678, the Grand Council issued a warrant to Capt. Maurice Mathewes, Surveyor-General,[2]

"to admeasure and Lay out for S[r] Peter Colleton Barr[t]
"one of the Lords & Absolute Prop[rs] of this Province

[1] S. C. Hist. and Geneal. Mag., Vol. I, p. 325.
[2] Printed Warranty Book, p. 155.

"Twelve thousand acres of Land as a Signiorie upon "the Wando River & that Tract of Land called the "Mulberry plantacon."

In March, 1673, Capt. Maurice Mathews had reported to the Grand Council that he had marked 12,000 acres of land for Lord Ashley,[3]

"on the first bluff bank upon the first Indian plantacon "on the right hand in the Westerne branch of the "North river commonly called y^e^ Mulberry tree."

This 12,000 acres was not granted to Lord Ashley, who took out his Signiory on Ashley River, and is evidently the same 12,000 acres as referred to in the warrant for Sir Peter Colleton. At that period Cooper River was frequently called Wando River.

The formal grant for the 12,000 acres, to Sir Peter Colleton, was issued 7^th^ September, 1678.[4] For some reason the same tract appears on the record to have been twice regranted to him.

There is a grant dated 6^th^ January, 1685[5] and another dated 12^th^ February, 1688.[6]

Whence the name Fair Lawn was derived does not appear. It was so styled very early, for the grant of 6^th^ January, 1685, is of

"a plantation or Plat of Ground commonly called or "known by the name of Fair-lawns now in his posses- "sion containing 12,000 acres."

And the grant of 12^th^ February, 1688, repeats the same designation. All the grants locate it as situate,

"on the Western Branch of the T in Cooper River."

And the last two grants specifically include

"all Cedar Land or Marsh land between it and the "Western Branch of the T aforesaid."

[3]S. C. Hist. and Geneal. Mag., Vol. XI, p. 80.
[4]Office Secry. State, Vol. 38 (Proprietory Grants), pp. 10 and 11.
[5]Ibid, p. 67.
[6]Ibid, p. 68.

On 6th September, 1679, an additional grant was issued to Sir Peter Colleton for 4,423 acres on Cooper River, lying adjoining to and South of the Fair Lawn Signiory.[7]

The tract included in this last grant was afterwards known as "Mulberry," although it would appear, from what subsequently occurred in connection with the sale to Thomas Broughton, that the "first bluff bank," commonly called the "Mulberry tree," was within the lines of the Fair Lawn Signiory.

To what extent Sir Peter Colleton settled and cultivated his Signiory can be only guessed at. He died in 1694[8] and was succeeded in his Proprietorship and Signiory by his son, Sir John Colleton (the 3d Baronet), who was a minor at his father's death.

His daughter, Katherine Colleton, was the executrix of Sir Peter's will, and on the 13th November, 1694, she made an agreement with "Robert Ball, of Standford in the County "of Lincoln Yeoman," whereby Ball was to come to South Carolina and take possession of all the lands, plantations, slaves, stock, etc., of Sir Peter Colleton's estate, and make and transmit an inventory to Katherine Colleton "at the "now dwelling house of Mr William Thornburgh of Lon- "don merchant scituate on Tower Hill London," and was also to farm, cultivate and utilize all the same, transmitting the proceeds to Miss Colleton as executrix.[9]

Ball was to receive as compensation £30 stg. for making the inventory, etc., and thereafter £30 stg. per annum salary.

At that date, 1694, it would seem that Fair Lawn had been, settled with slaves, stock, etc., and was in condition for culture and utilization.

It is doubtful whether the large brick mansion, afterwards the residence on the Signiory, could have been constructed at that early date.

Ball seems to have continued in charge until 1702, for

[7]Ibid, pp. 15 and 16.

[8]Probate Ct., Charleston, Bk. 1694-1704, p. 397. Sir Bernard Burke, in his "Peerage Baronetage," etc., states that Sir Peter died in 1679. This is a mistake, as his will was dated 12 January, 1693.

[9]Probate Ct., Charleston, Bk. 1694-1704, p. 23.

on 21st September, 1702, Sir John Colleton executed an instrument declaring that Ball had been sent out by Katherine Colleton, but that he "Sr John Colleton of Stratford in "the County of Essex Baronett," had now attained 21 years and annulling the power of attorney to Robert Ball, and constituting "Sr Nathaniel Johnson of Carolina Knight," his representative to take charge of his interests in South Carolina.[10]

On 20th January, 1708, Sir John Colleton executed a conveyance to "Thomas Broughton of South Carolina in "America aforesd Gent:" of the tract of 4,423 acres granted to his father on 6th Septr, 1679, describing it as "on the "Westerne Branch of the T in Cooper river butting and "bounding East on said River or Westerne Branch of the "T the Cedar Land being reckoned into the quantity North "upon other lands of Sr Peter Colleton West and South on "lands not taken up" * * * "which said plantation is "now called or known by the name of the Mulberry Planta-"tion."[11]

This constituted the Mulberry plantation, parts of which continued in the Broughton family for near two centuries.

There seems, however, to have been some mistake about the location of that same "bluff bank" commonly called the "Mulberry tree," which gave the name to the "Mulberry Plantation."

It seems to have been assumed by Thomas Broughton, that it was on the tract of 4,423 acres acquired by him, and after his purchase he placed his settlements upon it. This was a mistake, and he found that his settlements were really located on the extreme Southeastern part of the Fair Lawn Signiory.

On 17th May, 1712, Sir John Colleton and Thomas Broughton entered into an agreement of exchange. This agreement recites that "Coll: Thomas Broughton" had lately set up some erections and buildings on a part of "fair lawns plantation," adjoining to the plantation called the "Mulberry plantation," and Sir John Colleton transferred

[10]Prob. Ct., Charleston., Bk. 1694-1704, p. 397.
[11]Office Hist. Com., "Grant Bk. 1701-1712," p. 37.

to Col. Broughton 300 acres off that part of Fair Lawn; and in exchange Col. Broughton transferred to him 300 acres off the Northwest part of the Mulberry plantation, adjoining the Fair Lawn Signiory, Col. Broughton paying in addition £150, as representing the difference in value.[12]

This gave to Broughton the "bluff bank," on which his settlement was placed and on which his residence was later constructed (for many years commonly called Mulberry Castle), but not the low lands, suitable for rice culture lying between the high land of the 300 acres and the river. This low land was not taken off Fair Lawn until 1742, when by deed dated 16th March, 1742, the "Hon: John Colleton of Fair Lawn Barony," the son of Sir John Colleton conveyed to Nathaniel Broughton, son of Thomas Broughton, 211 acres, being the front of a certain tract of 300 acres, part of Fair Lawn Barony formerly conveyed by Sir John Colleton to the Hon. Thomas Broughton; the 211 acres bounding East and Northeast on the Western branch of Cooper River.[13]

Sir John Colleton had three sons, of whom two, John and Peter, made South Carolina their home.

John, the eldest son, generally styled as the "Honorable John Colleton," lived at Fair Lawn. In the documents signed by him, describing himself as "of Fair Lawn," and to him is probably due the extensive construction that once existed on the Barony. His granddaughter, Mrs. Graves, in the pamphlet, mentioned in the above mentioned article on the Colleton Family, expressly states that the mansion on the place, in which she was born, had been built by her grandfather, and adds,

> "This mansion as it was for a family residence was
> "of course very magnificent and of such great extent
> "that when the British troops made a rapid retreat
> "after the battle of the Eutaw Springs on reaching it
> "they rallied under the shelter of the buildings."

The ruins of the old Fair Lawn residence do indicate an extent and style of construction not likely to have been

[12]Office Hist. Com[n], "Grant Bk. 1701-1714," p. 250.
[13]M. C. O., Charleston, Bk. Y., p. 420.

undertaken, save by one who actually made the place his residence.

As one of the wealthiest land and slave owners in the Province, it was entirely within his capacity, and the circumstances would corroborate Mrs. Graves' recollection as to the date of construction.

To his son, Peter, Sir John Colleton had given the Barony on Colleton Neck in Beaufort County, called the Devils Elbow Barony. Peter, however, purchased a plantation of about 300 acres, called "Epsom," lying on Biggon Creek, adjoining the Fair Lawn Signiory to the Northeast. Peter died unmarried, in the lifetime of his brother, and the Devils Elbow Barony (presumably under his will) seems to have gone to his brother John, whilst the "Epsom" plantation he devised to his brother Robert.

The Hon. John Colleton died in 1751, before his father, leaving a widow, who did not long survive him, dying in the Autumn of the same year, 1751, and as there appears to be no family graveyard on Fair Lawn, they were both probably interred at the Parish Church of St. John Berkeley, commonly called Biggon Church, which is not far from Fair Lawn.

Sir John Colleton, 3[d] Baronet, died in 1754, and was succeeded by his grandson, Sir John Colleton, 4[th] Baronet, the son of the Honorable John Colleton.

This last Sir John also lived in South Carolina and made Fair Lawn his home. During his life a considerable portion of the Barony was sold off. The Barony, at the death of the Honorable John Colleton was intact in its dimensions, with the exception of the 511 acres transferred to the Broughtons and for which 300 acres of the Mulberry plantation had been added to the Barony.

Sir John Colleton, the 4[th] Baronet, made the following transfers:

On 15[th] September, 1767, to Mary Broughton, 988 acres on the river front, adjoining the 511 acres transferred to Thomas and Nathaniel Broughton.[14] In the deed this 988

[14]M. C. O., Charleston, Bk. B. No. 6, p. 411.

acres is styled "Exeter" plantation, by which name it has ever since been known.

On the same day, 15th September, 1767, to Sedgewick Lewis, 1,000 acres on the river front, adjoining Exeter to the North.[15] At the time of sale this 1,000 acres is stated to be known as the "Little Landing," but after passing into Lewis' hands it acquired the name of Lewisfield, which it has ever since retained. Thro' intermarriage, the place subsequently passed into the Simons family, in whose possession it continued for many many years.

On 26th July, 1769, to John Mitchell, of Salisbury, North Carolina, he conveyed 1,004 acres not situate on the water front, but bounding to the East on the public road to Moncks Corner.[16] John Mitchell died in 1784, leaving two sons, John Mitchell and William Nisbet Mitchell.[17] By his will he leaves his plantation, which he styles "Fairfield," to his son John; and this latter John, who died in 1800,[18] left the Fairfield plantation to his son William, with remainder over to his brother William Nisbet Mitchell, should his son die before 21 years of age, without children. The child must have so died, as we find William Nisbet Mitchell in possession of the whole, which at his death appears to have been divided into two plantations, one called by the original name of Fairfield,[19] containing some 470 acres, and the other of some 521 acres, on which William Nisbet Mitchell lived, called Castle Ruin and Bamboretta.[20] It is possible the plantation had been divided in the life time of the first John Mitchell and the "Castle Ruin" part then given to William Nisbet Mitchell.

This William Nisbet Mitchell directs, in his Will on record,[21] that the burial ground at Fairfield, in which his brother and his children were buried, and in which his own body was to be deposited, should, by his executors, be enclosed with a substantial brick wall.

[15]Ibid Bk. H. 3, p. 70.
[16]Ibid, Bk. C. 4, p. 40.
[17]Probate Court, Charleston, Bk. A., p. 365.
[18]Ibid, Bk. C., p. 659.
[19]M. C. O., Charleston, Bk. A. 10, p. 23.
[20]Ibid, Bk. X. 9, p. 67.
[21]Probate Ct., Charleston, Bk. G., p. 1.

This is all the reference to his burial that appears in his Will; but the late Dr. J. B. Irving, in his sketch, entitled "A Day on Cooper River," published in 1842, states that Mitchell left another Will which owing to some defects was not allowed to stand, but which was for some time preserved as a curiosity, by a gentleman of St. John's Parish, and which Dr. Irving had seen.

In this Will he directed his body to be burned in an iron coffin, purchased by himself for the purpose in his life time. His remains, he directed to be placed in this coffin above ground, in the woods on two brick piles, with brick enclosures around it. His funeral pyre was ordered to consist of alternate layers of light-wood and hickory, "twelve "feet long so that it should burn fiercely," and the neighborhood were to be entertained in festivity, when the burning took place. His directions were complied with. His coffin was placed in the pine land near his former residence, about two miles West of the 28-mile stone, on the Moncks Corner road. There the body was consumed to ashes, in the coffin which was then properly secured and locked, and the key thrown in the middle of Cooper River.

Dr. Irving adds:

> "The spot is well chosen, being a very secluded one, "and not altogether destitute of romantic interest. In "the early spring the wild violet and the jessamine "bloom around it. At the period of my visit to it these "little flowers were all wet with the morning dew—in "tears and sorrow as it were for one who chose that "his final resting place on earth, should be far from "the haunts of men, and that nature should be his only "mourner."

Sir John also sold to John Giles, some time prior to 1777, a tract of 514 acres fronting on the public road to Moncks Corner.[21]

Sir John Colleton, 4th Baronet, married first Anne Fulford, daughter of Frances Fulford, of Great Fulford, by whom he had one child, a daughter, Louisa Carolina. His marriage to Anne Fulford, having been dissolved by Act of

[21]M. C. O., Charleston, Bk. U. 7, p. 291.

Parliament, he married in 1774, Jane Mutter, and died in September, 1777, at Fair Lawn, and was interred at Biggon Church. By his will he left all his property to his daughter, Louisa Carolina.

Miss Louisa Carolina Colleton, married Capt. (afterwards Admiral) Richard Graves, of the British Navy, and during her lifetime the sale and breaking up of the Barony took place; although the final sales of the last of it were not had until after her death.

The following sales were made by Admiral Graves and his wife, viz:

1st Novr., 1815, to A. C. Mazyck[22]	260 acres.
26th Mch., 1816, to M. W. Smith[23]	416 acres.

Under a family arrangement the estate had been transferred to Samuel Colleton Graves, the son of Admiral and Mrs. Graves, and he made sales as follows:

2d May, 1818, to John White[24]	530 acres.
2d May, 1818, to Keating Simons[25]	576 acres.
17th Mch., 1821, to John White, the tract called Gippy Swamp[26]	1,875 acres.
5th Febry., 1822, to Samuel G. Barker, Trustee, the tract called the "Old House"[27]	2,144 acres

Samuel Colleton Graves died in 1823, and after his death, Mrs. Graves' property was liquidated under proceedings in court, and on 26th March, 1839, the Master in Equity conveyed to John H. Dawson[28] the tract called "Stony Landing" containing 2,319 acres. This tract was so called from the name of the landing, which was at the point on Biggon Creek where the road to the "Congarees" began, and which road crossed the main public road at Moncks corner. This landing, being at practically the head of navigation on Cooper River, supplies, etc., etc., intended for the interior, were frequently carried by water

[22]M. C. O., Charleston, Bk. X. 8, p. 14.
[23]Ibid, Bk. S. 8, p. 57.
[24]Ib'd, Bk. F. 9, p. 238.
[25]Ibid, Bk. B. 9, p. 52.
[26]Ibid, Bk. F. 9, p. 441.
[27]Ibid, Bk. H. 9, p. 221.
[28]Ibid, Bk. A. 11, p. 331.

to this landing and thence up the Congaree road. The landing was denominated "stony" for the reason that the marl underlying the surface of the ground at that point plainly crops out near the surface.

The late Professor F. A. Porcher, in a description of the "Upper Beat of St. John's Berkeley," published in the transactions of the Huguenot Society of South Carolina for 1906, spells the name as "Stoney" landing, but this is a mistake, it should be "Stony."

About the same time the small remains of the Barony, viz: the pine land on Black Tom's swamp, West of the land sold to John Mitchell, and the 300 acres pine land exchanged by Thomas Broughton, appear also to have been sold.

Of the old Fair Lawn residence the merest ruins remain. An account of its destruction by the British, during the Revolutionary war, is given in the Article in this magazine for October, 1900. There is an error in that article, where it is stated (on p. 334) that the land near to and including the village of Pinopolis is on the original Barony. Pinopolis is some distance away to the North, and is on no part of Fair Lawn Barony.

The map published with this sketch of the history of the Fair Lawn Signiory is made up so as to show the lines of the original grant and its location with respect to surrounding places, and the approximate lines of the subdivisions made of the Barony.